



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

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NORTHERN AZ. MAN SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR RAPE AND MURDER

PHOENIX – Brandon Pete, 20, of Greasewood, Ariz., was sentenced here today to life in prison on each of four separate counts by U.S. District Judge Robert C. Broomfield. On May 18, 2002, Pete, then 16 years old, and three other men picked up Charlotte Jane Brown while she was hitchhiking close to her home in Steamboat, Ariz., on the Navajo Reservation. The four men then raped and killed her.

Charlotte Brown was driven to a remote location where she was restrained and forcibly raped by Pete and each of the three other assailants. Following the rape, Brown was forced back into the car and driven a few miles away, to yet another remote location in the woods northeast of Jeddito, Ariz. As they drove to the second location, Irvin Cepi, one of the co-defendants, and the others plotted to kill Brown in order to prevent her from reporting them for the rape. Brown was killed when Cepi smashed a large rock upon the right side of her head while she pleaded with him for her life. Cepi then concealed Brown's body under some rocks in a nearby wash. Her partial remains, scattered and scavenged by predators, were not discovered until August 26, 2002.

Pete was found guilty by a federal jury on October 31, 2005, of the following counts: Second Degree Murder, Felony Murder in the Course of Kidnapping, Kidnapping, Felony Murder in the Course of Aggravated Sexual Abuse, Aggravated Sexual Abuse, Sexual Abuse Resulting in Death, and Conspiracy to Commit First Degree Murder. Since he was sentenced to life in prison for four of the greater offenses, he was not sentenced on the Kidnapping, Aggravated Sexual Abuse and Sexual Abuse Resulting in Death charges. Co-defendant Cepi was sentenced to life in prison on May 24, 2004. Information on the remaining co-defendants is not available.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the FBI and the Navajo Nation Department of Law Enforcement Services. The prosecution was handled by Vincent Kirby, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-03-355-PCT-RCB
RELEASE NUMBER: 2006-052(Pete)

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